sfaa NEWSLETTER APRIL, 1960

Dear General Member:

We all know that our membership in the Association is important — or we would not be members. We know that this membership is important because it directly supports the major creative center for the visual arts in our community. You are a patron of art, and we need your support more than ever.

The unique nature of the Association's achievement will appeal chiefly to those few who are rightly concerned with the present and future culture of their community, as well as the past.

Because this Association depends upon the few more than do other organizations, it also depends upon those few moving to higher categories of membership.

As you perhaps already know, the San Francisco Art Association membership categories are:

Regular	*$15.00*
Participating	*25.00*
Patron	*50.00*
Sustaining	*100.00*
Benefactor	*250.00*

Would you consider raising your membership status? If so, please call Miss Winterburn at OR 3-2640 and discuss the matter with her so that your July dues bill can be written for the correct amount. The tax deduction feature remains the same.

Sincerely yours,
Chauncey McKeever,
Chairman
Membership Committee

Mrs. Joseph Bransten raised the category of her membership from Participating to Patron.

HIGH SCHOOL ART – 1960

The California School of Fine Arts is presenting an exhibition of work by senior high school art students from April 25 through May 1.

The show will be held at the School in the Main Gallery and will be open to the public Monday, April 25 through Thursday, April 28 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., on Friday, April 29 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Saturday, April 30 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on Sunday, May 1 from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m.

This special exhibition is being given to encourage understanding between the art student, art teacher and parent and to give emphasis to the fine work that is done on the secondary school level in San Francisco.

All entries including works of painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, photography and graphics were juried by **George Culler**, Associate Director of the San Francisco Museum of Art; **Ralph DuCasse**, painter, Art Department of Mills College; and **Gurdon Woods**, Director of the California School of Fine Arts.

Prizes were donated by the Bay Area Photographers, Dimitroff's Art Supplies, Flax, the Hobby Center, Philips' Art Supplies, Schwabacher-Frey, the San Francisco Art Association and the Student Association of the California School of Fine Arts. Printing was donated by Lawton Kennedy, Printer and Recorder-Sunset Press.

COLLECTORS' SEMINAR

The first collectors' seminar will be held on May 11 at 8:00 in the Gallery at 800 Chestnut Street. **Fred Martin**, Executive Secretary of the Association, will lead a lecture-conversation on the works in the special exhibition which will be shown in connection with the two seminars.

The exhibition will feature works by **Frank Lobdell, Ralph DuCasse, Sam Tchakalian, Richard Diebenkorn, Elmer Bischoff, Nathan Oliveira, Wally Hedrick, Jay De Feo, Bruce Conner, Manuel Neri, Jeremy Anderson, David Tolerton** and will be on view from May 3 through May 20.

The second collectors' seminar will be held on Tuesday, May 17 at 8:00 p.m. in the Social Hall of the California School of Fine Arts. Called "Art Now", it will feature, **James Ackerman**, art historian at UC, **Bruce Conner**, painter, **Ralph DuCasse**, painter, **Paul Mills**, director of the Oakland Art Museum, **Nathan Oliveira**, painter and printmaker and **Gurdon Woods**, sculptor and Executive Director of the Art Association who will act as moderator. The panel will discuss their own and others' works.

Admission is free to members. $1.00 per seminar will be charged to non-members.

ARTIST MEMBER NOTES AND NEWS

Peter Shoemaker is showing oils at the Oakland Jewish Community Center.

The Proteo Gallery in Mexico City has a one-man show of paintings by **Peter Rodriguez** May 11 through June 14.

Rolf Eiselin has had an entry accepted in the current exhibition at the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts.

Artists Cooperative in San Francisco has been featuring paintings by **Syd Fossum.**

Evelyn Kane is participating in a "Leading Western Women Painters Exhibit" at the Santa Monica Library Gallery in May.

Dennis Beall, Richard Graf, George Miyasaki and **Nathan Oliveira** are exhibiting prints at the San Francisco Museum of Art through May 15.

SPECIAL EVENT

On May 6 at 8:00 p.m., **Terry Riley** and **La Mont Young** will present a program of sound improvisation. The program is free to members and will take place in the Social Hall at 800 Chestnut Street. Both tapes and live improvisation will be utilized in this unusual offering.

Mr. Young studied last year under Stockhausen, one of the originators of "electronic music". **Mr. Riley** has been a pupil of Robert Erickson. Both men are in the last year of the Masters Program in Music at the University of California and both have received Hertz Music Fellowships.

Those wishing to attend this May 6 performance, are asked to call the San Francisco Art Association at ORdway 3-2640.

NEW MEMBERS

Participating: **Tallant Tubbs**

Regular: **Mrs. John D. Berl, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Cravens, Mrs. Joseph D. Cuneo, Rene Di Rosa, Polk Dodson, Charles Fahlin, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. W. Parmer Fuller, Mrs. Henry Howard, Mrs. Power Simmons Maddix, Mr. and Mrs. William W. Mein, Jr. and Allen Spivack.**

Artist: **Roger Bolomey, Dennis Beall and Wendell Brazeau, Karla Moss, Carrie McAlister.**

ART ON THE SOUTHERN FRONT

by Carl Hertel

The Los Angeles Art Situation is fraught with political problems this spring. The battle has been joined on two fronts. The first, a controversy over naming the new proposed County Art Museum after multimillionaire, banker, donor Howard Ahmanson. The second, resentment by certain groups of L. A. artists over the announcement that the County Fair Art Exhibition will show only "representational, objective" works this year.

The museum mess was brought to a head by an open letter from critic Jules Langsner to County Supervisors calling for reappraisal of plans to name the proposed public facility after a private individual. He also urged supervisors to let "professional art experts" handle organization of the new museum. The controversy seems to amount to a battle for power between philanthropists and "art experts". Ironically, it is all in the name of "public interest".

The County Fair fiasco arose after the Laguna Beach Art Association was given responsibility for organizing this year's Art Exhibition. This in itself was a rebuke to local art interests in that Laguna Beach is in another county. The aims of the appointment became clear when it was announced that only representational art would be shown. Artists easily interpreted this as an attempt to produce a publically popular show albeit one unrepresentative of developments in art throughout the state.

Unhappily, both battles represent a tendency to inhibit artistic freedom, devaluating art's legitimate influence through limitation of public dissemination of art by a few powerful pressure groups with other than artistic axes to grind.

(For more information about the L. A. County Fair see "County Fair Exhibition" article)

L. A. COUNTY FAIR EXHIBITION

The officials of the Los Angeles County Fair have asked the Laguna Beach Art Association to manage, choose the jury and arrange a contemporary, representational exhibit of painting and sculpture by California artists. The exhibition will be held at Pomona from September 16 through October 2.

Only one work done by a resident of California may be entered: an oil, a watercolor, a pastel, an etching or a piece of sculpture. The Officials of the Fair want "an exhibit of objective, contemporary representational work of three basic modes — realism, idealism and expressionism of any style, school or technique. The Fair Officials do not want to exhibit this year non-objective work."

All work will be processed by Bruggers in Los Angeles for $1.00 plus "a reasonable fee". The Laguna Beach Art Association is charging all entrants an additional $2.00 "Handling fee".

Jurors are **Norman Hall, Maurice Logan, Donal Hord, Roy Mason and Douglass Parshall.** The awards total $2,000. Entry blanks, fees and works are due by August 20. Blanks may be secured from the San Francisco Art Association or by writing to: Laguna Beach Art Association, 307 Cliff Drive, Laguna Beach. (For more information about this exhibition see "Art on the Southern Front").

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CRITICISM

by David Simpson

In an age when, to be considered articulate, all one has to do is talk a lot, it's not surprising to find we have barely a few critics worthy of the name.

In magazines and newspapers we see everything from rapsodical nonsense to plain decription with the appendage "I like" or "I dislike" passing as critical analyses. This circumstance is as true in the field of art as any other.

Recently one San Francisco columnist went so far as to confuse the title of a painting with the painting itself, and proudly boasted of his confusion in print.

One of the first advantages of an abstract art is its ambiguity. In this sense art is similar to poetry. One poem can have infinite meaning, depending on the amount of imagination the reader brings to it. In the art of painting, this "vague" quality liberates the observer, if he only realizes it, and avoids limiting him to one set of responses. A red barn – or a painting of one – remains irrevocably just that, a blasted red barn, no matter how much imagination the observer may possess or how much he may dislike red barns.

Few enough of our contemporary writers seem willing, or secure enough, to take the risk of allowing art to remain vague. This is partly because recognition of the subject matter is still mistaken for understanding content, and partly because a certain amount of pain or anxiety is unavoidable if one is to really experience art. Pain in fact, is to be welcomed as the only way of expanding one's awareness through art. Experience is the way we broaden our awareness – simple enough. But when we fail to respond to new experience because of the pain involved in attempting an assimilation, we hardly qualify ourselves as experts.

East Coast writers seem to suffer from a different, but equally intense misunderstanding. The most recent example to my knowledge, is found in one of the new paper books.

Published by Evergreen, in its Gallery series, **School of New York, Some Younger Artists**, edited by B. H. Friedman, the book is a collection of strange essays about an equal number of not so strange local boys and girls of the New York scene. The essays divide roughly into two groups; those which defend the artist from the inevitable accusation of eclecticism, and those which apologize for their being eclectic. With the exception of the introduction – Mr. Friedman likes everyone – the writers speak as personal friends, and one suspects, promoters of the artists. In the case of the writer as defender, the feeling is unavoidable that the artists in question simply told the writer why his painting was great, no matter what anybody says, and the author sat there taking notes. In that of the apologies, the attempt to justify the work in terms of the fact that the artist is a really nice fella expresses even better the confusion mentioned earlier. In New York the artists themselves are confused with their work.

In one essay, we find the artist is to be admired because her paintings "...constitute a response to imaginative problems, rather than a central image – a style, not a manner." Further, "Her work stands in contrast to much of the single-image painting of our day ..." In another, the single-mindedness of the artist is praised along with his Strong Central Image.

"Whatever the artist does, he is to be admired for it", they seem to say. And yet the fact that a defense or apology seems necessary – is never taken for the lack of conviction it exposes.

Criticism should attempt to analyze the work of the artist as a separate phenomenon, and place it within an historical context. Revolution fits into histories as well as do academies, and if there are still artists who are frightened by history, they're unknown to me.

Luckily there are a few good critics still active. The names of Dore Ashton and Robert Coates, both of whom occasionally rise above the descriptive level, come to mind.

It seems necessary to clarify our terms. Writers who only describe and like or dislike are "reviewers", just as those who confuse the artist with his work are biographers. Those who analyze and compare, deal in concept and context, are critics.

To be continued

ART BANK REPORT

The Art Bank report to the membership carried in the Newsletter is, sadly, always about one month behind. This is caused by the Newsletter deadline of the 15th of the month – too early for any kind of complete report on the doings of the month, yet almost too late for report on activities of the month before.

The most notable development in March was the sharp increase of out-of-town visitors to the Bank and of local or nearby people who are planning to open new sales galleries. Their names are listed below. The usual policy with respect to dealers has been followed with these people. That is, the Art Bank will act as the artist's agent in effecting loans to non-profit organizations and educational institutions (museums, colleges, etc.), but does not ordinarily make loans to private individuals or commercial galleries. Loans to such institutions as these are made as follows: The Art Bank shows work to the dealer and requests him to contact the artist directly and secure his permission to borrow work. On receipt of written order from the artist the Bank will release work to the dealer in question. All responsibility for the work is then up to the artist and the dealer.

The large number of dealers, critics, museum people and so on in the Bank in March emphasizes the importance of artists being represented by their best work. One should remember that work in the Bank is not "out of circulation" but rather is in a position to be seen by far more people than could see it in the artists' studio, or, in the long run, a dealer's storeroom.

"Bottles", a watercolor by **Eric Oback**, is lost. Last seen in the Art Bank, its present whereabouts are unknown. Anyone with information on the present location of this painting, please contact the Art Bank.

Those artists shown in the gallery last month were: **Allen, Armer, Barletta, Cardeiro, DuCasse, Kaner, Loberg, Nadalini, Safford, Giambruni, Ward, Eiselin, Hack, Johnson, Kirby, McChesney, Nakano, Philipp, Provenzano, Rasmusen, Smith, Bechtle, DeLap, Faulkner, Koch, Lapp, McCray, Moya del Pino, Norman, Remington, Rodriguez, Rubinstein, Sinton, Trave, Wiley, Wolff, Turner.** Sculpture by **Woods** and **O'Hanlon** was shown at the Junior Center of Arts and Sciences in Oakland.

Visitors to the Art Bank included: **Lloyd Goodrich**, Director, Whitney Museum; **George Staempfli** of the Staempfli Gallery, N. Y.; **Marvin Hollis**, of the Gallery of Fine Art, S. F.; **Mason Layman** of Layman Gallery, S.F., **Dick Niebaur** of Edward Dean Gallery, S.F.; **Joseph Danysh**, Casa Manana, Monterey; **Philip Lewis** for A. I. A.; **John Russell** of the London Sunday Times; **Mary Bishop**, Stainton Gallery, Oakland. Volunteers for March were **Katherine Barieau, Frances Baldwin** and **Ellen Bransten.**

William Brown resigned from the Board of Directors of the Art Association due to conflict with teaching times at Davis.

This is the first in a series of expanded Newsletters. We hope to continue bringing you art news coverage in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Sacramento, and in the future will have articles by correspondents in Seattle and Vancouver as well as art book reviews. Your comments and contributions will be greatly appreciated. Please direct all correspondence to Lou Schultz, San Francisco Art Association, 800 Chestnut Street, San Francisco. Deadlines are the 15th of each month.

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